

first time from the lake. The majority of the forms are freshwater in origin. Marine component of the fauna is poor (11 to 14). The bulk of commercial prawn catch is composed of four species (1, 2, 13, 14). The distribution of forms 1 to 5 is predominantly coastal though there are some localities well removed from the sea along the course of large rivers. Atyid species (7 to 10) are generally distributed among the roots of floating vegetation and slow-moving water.

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All the amphipods (15 to 25) are being recorded for the first time from the lake. *Podoceros insignis* was earlier recorded only from Tale Sap in Thailand; it is recorded for the first time from outside that area. The present record of amphipods helps to bridge the distributional gap between the southern and north-eastern parts of India.

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33. A FIRST REPORT OF AN ARACHNID ORDER UROPYGIDA (WHIP SCORPION) FROM MAHARASHTRA (With a text-figure)

The Uropygids, commonly known as whip-scorpions, are natives of Oriental and Neotropical evergreen forests. At once recognisable from Scorpions by the presence of a deep constriction between the cephalothorax and abdomen, by the absence of pectines and a long thin whiplike tail instead of a broadly segmented metasoma bearing a poison gland at the tip. Whipscorpions are animals of moderate size, and range between 20-50 mm in total body length. They generally live under bark and forest litter and thus go unnoticed. There are about 44 species under 15 genera from the Oriental region of which only 6 species of 4 genera have so far been described from India,

namely *Thelyphonus sepiaris* Butler, 1873 (Madras, Tamil Nadu), *T. cristatus* Pocock, 1900 (West Bengal), *Uroproctus assamensis* Stolicza, 1869 (Khasi Hills, Meghalaya), *Labochirus tauricornis* Pocock, 1899 (Mangalore, Karnataka) and *Hypoctonus oatesii* Pocock, 1900 (Assam) (Fig. 1A).

It is apparent from the distributional records that the Indian species of whipscorpions have been reported only from southern, eastern and north-eastern parts of the country and hitherto there was no record available of this group from western India and especially from Maharashtra. Thus this note intends to place on record the existence of this order in the state

of Maharashtra and to extend its distribution in western India.

A single specimen (male) was recovered from forest litter from Chandgad (lat. 15° 55' N, long. 74° 10' E; 850 MSL) of Kolhapur District, Maharashtra during recent mopping survey programme, 1986. This specimen measures 27.50 mm in total body length and the

tail or whip measures more than half the total length. The whip comprises of more than 40 uneven, sparsely haired annuli. A pair of omatidia is conspicuous on the last abdominal segment. This specimen belongs to the family Hypoctonidae and the genus *Labochirus* Pocock, but it does not fit into the key of known Indian species (Fig. 1 B).

FIG. 1

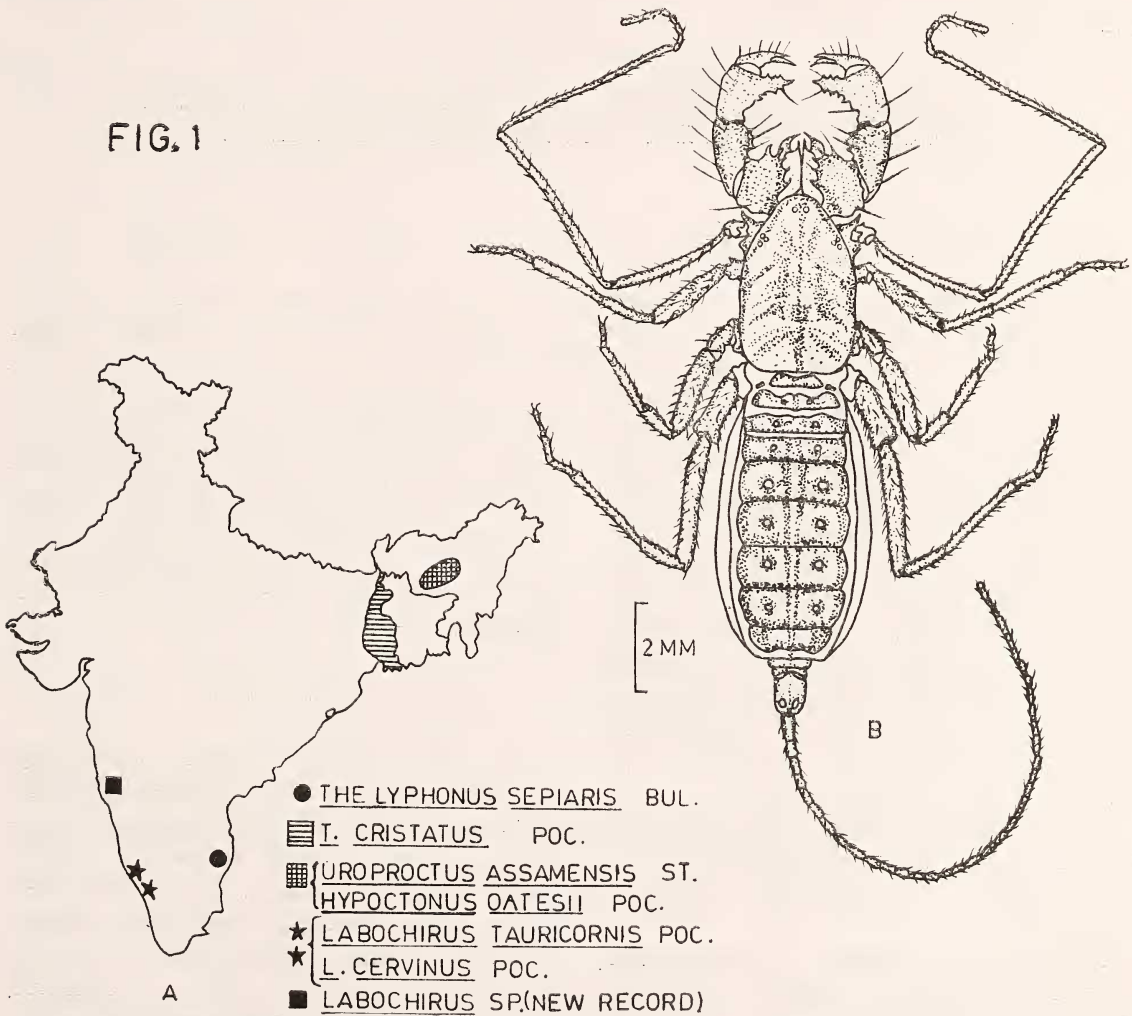


Fig. 1. A. Showing the distribution of Uropygid species in India.
B. Showing a specimen collected from Kolhapur District, Maharashtra, Western India.

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34. AGGREGATING TENDENCY IN *MESOBUTHUS TAMULUS*
TAMULUS (FABRICIUS) (SCORPIONIDA, BUTHIDAE)

INTRODUCTION

It is known that scorpions do not display social organisation. Fabre (1907), in his study of *Buthus occitanus*, noted that he did not find two of them under the same stone; whenever there were two, one was engaged in eating the other! Cloudsley-Thompson (1958) pointed out that no association of individuals was tolerated by any species. Vachon (1952) did not find any evidence of social instincts in European scorpions.

An account by McAlister (1966) on *Centruroides vittatus* Say (Scorpionida, Buthidae) about its aggregating tendency, formed a turning point in the study of scorpion behaviour. Polis and Lourenco (1986) studied the evolution of sociality among scorpions.

The present paper deals with an observations on *Mesobuthus tamulus tamulus* (Fabr.), the commonly occurring yellow scorpion in Maharashtra.

Under captive conditions, scorpions display an abnormal aggregating behaviour due to lack of shelter. Some Buthids live in colonies and all members of a colony live in the same burrow or hole (Tikader and Bastawade 1983).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Seventeen females and 4 males of *M. t. tamulus* (Fabr.) collected near Bopkhel village, Dapodi, Pune were kept under observations in a wooden cage of size 45 cm × 30 cm × 30 cm with its three sides of wire mesh and top with a glass door. A layer of black soil was spread up to 2 cm. depth at the bottom. Pieces of coconut shell were kept in the cage as shelter. These shells were dislodged daily. Insects were given as food and water was replaced twice a week in the cage.

OBSERVATIONS

At night, scorpions roamed in the cage, with their pedipalps held up, fingers open, and metasoma raised vertically. However in the morning, they clustered below the coconut shells, inactive and lying one above the other. The pedipalps were closed near the chelicerae and the scorpions resisted removal from this association. Though the shelter was displaced, daily, the scorpions were located below the shell, the next day. However, in the field, *M. t. tamulus* (Fabr.) do not aggregate, one or